



Tragically, the safe rooms were not so safe.

That is something I think about every single day.

Ever since I stood in the safe rooms of Kibbutz Be'eri in southern Israel, recalling how so many precious lives were taken there.

And why were these safe rooms not so safe? In our Torah reading for the festival of Shavuot in Parshat Yitro, we will recall the words of Hashem 'Va'essa etchem al-kanfei nesharim' – I brought you out of Egypt upon the wings of eagles.

Why 'upon' the wings of eagles and not 'tachat kanfei' – under the wings?

Well, you see, usually when birds carry their young, they clutch them within their feet, and they transport them through the air in this way.

That's because the birds fear an attack from the side or from above.

But eagles soar above all other creatures, the only thing that eagles have to worry about is the arrow which human beings might shoot from below and, it is said that this is why the eagle, remarkably, carries its young on its wings.

So, Hashem is saying to us, I was like that eagle for you, because I presented those clouds which separated the Egyptians and the Israelites and guaranteed that you were

safe from them. I created that buffer, I protected you.

And when I recall what happened on that awful day of October 7th, when so many people ran into their safe rooms, they were designed to be safe from attacks from above, from the missiles that might fall upon them.

They were never designed for that awful situation in which terrorists might attack them from the side.

And therefore, they may have been strong rooms, but the doors didn't have locks, and that's how the cruel terrorists were able to gain access to them.

So, as we approach the festival of Shavuot, our prayer to Almighty God is, in the same way as you protected us from the Egyptians, so may you protect us now.

Please Hashem protect the State of Israel from those with cruel intent, who seek to destroy Her.

Please protect the hostages and enable them to be brought home soon.

Please protect Jewish people around the world and from this Shavuot onwards, may we be able to look forward to an era of peace, of security, of protection and of happiness for one and all.

Chag Sameach!